

Shunichi SATO et al.
Serial No.: Divisional of 09/735,226
Filed: Herewith
Page 16

REMARKS

The subject application is a divisional of U.S. Serial No. 09/735,226, filed December 12, 2000, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Serial No. 09/376,018, filed August 19, 1999, now U.S. Patent No. 6,207,973. The subject application also claims the benefit of priority from Japanese Application Nos. 10-249185, 10-286056, 10-333451 and 11-073497, filed August 19, 1998, September 22, 1998, November 9, 1998 and March 18, 1999.

By this Preliminary Amendment, Applicants have canceled claims 1-69, 73 and 74, amended claims 70-72, and added new claims 75-122. Accordingly, claims 70-72 and 75-122 are now pending and presented for examination in this application.

Applicants maintain that this Preliminary Amendment does not introduce new matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of this Preliminary Amendment.

In parent application no. 09/735,226, in a September 18, 2002 Restriction Requirement the Patent Office restricted Applicants to one of the following groups of claims then-pending in Serial No. 09/735,226:

- Group II: claims 35-37 and 43;
- Group III: claims 1-34, 38-42, 45-69 and 155-174;
- Group IV: claims 70, 71, 75-122; and
- Group V: claims 72-74 and 123-154.

On October 18, 2002, Applicants elected, with traverse, in Serial No. 09/735,226 to prosecute Group III, claims 1-34, 38-42, 45-69 and 155-174.

In this application, Applicants intend to pursue at least Group IV, claims 70, 71, and 75-122.

Shunichi SATO et al.
Serial No.: Divisional of 09/735,226
Filed: Herewith
Page 17

However, Applicant hereby reserve the right to pursue Group II (claims 35-37 and 43) and Group V (claims 72-74 and 123-154) in this application and/or in one or more divisional applications at a later time.

If a telephone interview would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the subject application, Applicants' undersigned attorney invites the Examiner to telephone him at the telephone number provided below.

No fee, other than the \$1,308.00 application fee for the divisional application filed concurrently herewith, is deemed necessary in connection with the filing of this Preliminary Amendment. However, if any additional fee is required, authorization is hereby given to charge the amount of any such fee to Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

Respectfully submitted,



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